

Don Johnson

From: Don Johnson
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2005 11:56 AM
To: Peter Ashton
Cc: Board of Selectmen
Subject: RE: Message for Walter Foster or Peter Ashton

Peter:
We will place this on the agenda. I have asked staff to prepare answers to your questions.

Regards,
Don

-----Original Message-----

From: Peter Ashton
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2005 9:48 AM
To: Don Johnson
Cc: Board of Selectmen
Subject: Fwd: Message for Walter Foster or Peter Ashton

Don:

Could you ensure that this request is placed on our agenda for our meeting next Monday. Also if it is appropriate to have a discussion about NARA fees for this year I guess now would also be the time for that as well. (I don't remeber having such a conversation earlier this year except in the context of the B Budget.) I would be particularly interested in knowing how many out of town beach passes we have sold each of the last two years compared with resident passes.

Don Johnson

From: Kis Gilfix Family [fkis@comcast.net]
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2005 9:13 AM
To: Board of Selectmen
Subject: Message for Walter Foster or Peter Ashton

Dear Town of Selectmen,

The young lady handling Acton Recreation referred me to you concerning this matter. I was hoping that you could extend to me an extension for the NARA park recreation early bird fee this year. My wife and I had every intention of signing up before May 1 and had even written the check beforehand, but the letter sat in our "to-do" pile and was unfortunately received past the deadline. The extra \$50 means quite a bit to us. We have always purchased these passes early, and we were staunch supporters of funding NARA (as well as the override.) As such, we really don't think it's fair for us to pay the same as out-of-town residents who signed up in April. Please let me know if it would be ok for us to resend the completed form with original \$135 check.

Not sure if you're looking for feedback, but as an Acton resident, I think the current NARA pricing model could afford to be modified. Acton residents funded the development of NARA, not residents from Boxborough, Concord, or Carlisle, many of whom reside in far more expensive real estate. To offer a summer pass to them at a mere \$50 more than what an Acton resident pays is, in my opinion, disrespectful to Acton residences and fiscally irresponsible. Consider the value NARA provides -- a new, supervised, town beach, one that's well maintained and rarely crowded. Consider that community pools generally charge \$600 to \$1000 per summer, and most aren't even available. Consider the financial burden imposed on the Acton tax payers who reluctantly agreed to fund the development of the project only to see, in many cases, wealthier out-of-towners reap the rewards by only having to pay \$50 more than they pay per season to use it!

I believe NARA should be offered as a service to Acton residents, one that nonetheless needs to be funded via ongoing fees. However, for those outside of Acton, NARA should be offered as a distinct privilege, one that demands a premium, and one that makes them appreciate what Acton has for Acton residents. For someone who moved out of Acton to avoid the Sewer betterment charge, or the bulk of the taxes necessary to fund the library, the high school, or NARA, and purchased a newer bigger home in Boxborough, paying \$50 more for NARA is negligible.

Symbolically, I think charging out-of-towners twice as much as Acton residents makes much more sense. Furthermore, because NARA's value is pretty unique in this area, I do not think there would be much price sensitivity on the part of Concord, Boxborough, or Carlisle residents who already have their hearts set on (or no other choice but) a season at NARA with their family. Unless we thought that doubling the price (\$85 and \$135 more than the current pricing model) would dissuade more than 50% of the out-of-towners from purchasing NARA passes -- something I find highly unlikely -- NARA would actually generate higher revenues than it does now.

Thank you for considering my input. Please contact me either via email or at home (263-4172) about my earlier request. We would very much appreciate the courtesy of an exception this year.

Sincerely,

Daniel Gilfix
21 Vanderbilt Road

5/20/2005